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LUCIAN AND DECLAMATION<sup>1</sup>

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Despite a growth in Lucianic commentary in recent decades,<sup>2</sup> the declamations in the Lucianic corpus have thus far received very little scholarly attention.<sup>3</sup> But given the virulent attacks on rhetoric elsewhere in the Lucianic corpus, it is something of a surprise to find Lucian declaiming. Scholars have usually explained this apparent contradiction by means of the literary periodization that Lucian's works themselves expound (below, pp. 6–8), assigning the declamations to what is described as an earlier, rhetorical phase of his career. But literary periodization, even or especially literary self-periodization, has rightly come to be regarded as problematic by scholars (especially since John Moles' 1978 article on Dio).<sup>4</sup> In this paper, I reject periodization for Lucian's career also. I focus on one of Lucian's declamations, the *Tyrannicida*,<sup>5</sup> and seek to show through close reading that this work is at least as at home in the corpus as most others: that when read closely, and in particular, when read against Choricus' version of the same scenario (Choricus *Declamationes* 7),<sup>6</sup> this declamation emerges as a witty, insightful, and truly Lucianic perversion of a major contemporary cultural phenomenon.

I. LYCINUS<sup>7</sup> ON RHETORIC

The Lucianic persona is not, generally speaking, well-disposed to contemporary rhetoric.<sup>8</sup> The clearest example of this is obviously the *Rhetorum Praeceptor*, but similar complaints can be found all over the corpus, particularly in the *Piscator*, *Pseudologista*, and *Lexiphanes*. There are attacks narrowly concentrated on stylistic issues, as well as broader attacks on the associated culture. Stylistically, the bad teacher of rhetoric of the *Rhetorum Praeceptor* propounds superficial, outdated, or

even simply incorrect Atticism (16, 17, 18, 20), ignorance of the classics (17), random ordering of one's material (18), and superfluous *exempla* and comparisons (18, 20); the prescription of the good teacher of rhetoric — absurdly rigid prescriptivism and the relentless study of outdated and worthless classics (9–10) — is hardly much better. To the *Rhetorum Praeceptor*'s list of failings, Lycinus in the *Lexiphanes* adds choosing words before thoughts, and fitting the latter to the former (24): this might sound like a criticism of the overuse of figures, but the example given — an incorrect use of the word θυμάλωψ (“piece of burning wood”) — is another instance of excessive and ignorant Atticism. In the *Pseudologista*, the declamations of Lucian's opponent, perhaps the sophist Hadrian of Tyre,<sup>9</sup> are attacked as ἑωλα (“stale”) (5) and cobbled together from the declamations of others (5–6; 25); as a specific example of a stylistic failing reference is made to an alleged occasion on which Hadrian, presumably playing the part of a husband discovering his wife committing adultery, asked not for a sword but a trident to dispatch the three lovers that he had found in her bed (29).

In the *Rhetorum Praeceptor*, the whole culture associated with rhetoric comes under fire.<sup>10</sup> Rhetoric is imagined as pursued solely for the sake of fame (1, 6, 13, 25, 26), wealth (6), and power (6, 26); its practitioners are arrogant (13, 19, 21, 22), effeminate and obsessed with their appearances (11, 12, 15, 16, 20, 23, 26), sexually immoral (23), and corrupt (21, 25); they are said to need ἀμαθία (“ignorance,”) θράσος (“audacity,”) τόλμαν (“daring,”) and ἀναισχυντίαν (“shamelessness”) (15, 24). The *Piscator* offers a similar picture, describing the δυσχερῆ (“disagreeable aspects”) of rhetoric as ἀπάτην καὶ ψεῦδος καὶ θρασύτητα καὶ βοήν καὶ ὠθισμούς (“deception and lying and audacity and

shouting and altercations”) (29), while the *Lexiphanes* talks of ὁ τυφὸς δὲ καὶ ἡ μεγαλαυχία καὶ ἡ κακοήθεια καὶ τὸ βρενθύεσθαι καὶ λαρυγγίζειν (“vanity and arrogance and malice and haughtiness and shouting”) (24).

What is being attacked in all these passages is clearly the culture of declamatory rhetoric that Philostratus so memorably describes in the *Vitae Sophistarum*. Sometimes declamation is referred to specifically. At *Bis Accusatus* 32, Lycinus disparages τυράννων κατηγορίας (“denunciations of tyrants”) and ἀριστέων ἐπαίνους (“encomia of war heroes,”) both mainline topics of declamation often used by synecdoche to refer to the whole genre.<sup>11</sup> In the *Lexiphanes*, Lycinus identifies his target as τῶν ὀλίγον πρὸ ἡμῶν γενομένων σοφιστῶν τὰ φαυλότατα (“the utterly worthless products of those who were sophists a little before our time”) (*Lexiphanes* 23): while the literary output of a sophist was generally much broader than declamation alone, the genre of declamation is undoubtedly included in such a formulation. *Rhetorum Praeceptor* 18–22 also clearly envisages a declamation performance of the sort so familiar from Philostratus, with the audience suggesting the theme, the declamation delivered *ex tempore*, frequent use of clichés from the Persian wars, lively banter between declaimer and audience, and even the controversial ῥῳδή, the sung epilogue.<sup>12</sup> The general stylistic comments are also clearly appropriate to declamation. Besides a few comments about the linguistic Atticism that was so dominant in this period, what seems to be targeted particularly is the more flamboyant rhetorical style exemplified by Polemo and Hadrian’s surviving declamations,<sup>13</sup> as well as by numerous quotations in the *Vitae Sophistarum*. Abundant *exempla* are certainly characteristic of this style, and a part of what has been dubbed the “list style”;<sup>14</sup>

what Lycinus refers to as putting form before thought (*Lexiphanes* 24) would well describe the figures that are so prevalent and so obvious throughout Greek imperial declamation. With Hadrian's alleged use of the trident image we might parallel imagery such as the sophist Nicetes' ἐκ τῆς βασιλείου νεὼς Αἴγιναν ἀναδησώμεθα ("let us bind Aegina to the King's ship") (VS 513) or Polemo's Cynegirus, sending his famous severed hands against the Persians as if they were naval expeditions (Polemo *Callimachus* 23). No rhetorician is known to have recommended random arrangement, but what the bad teacher of rhetoric prescribes has something in common with the looser structure of works like Polemo's surviving declamations. This was probably a natural consequence of the exigencies of *ex tempore* composition: Polemo's arrangement of ideas is certainly very different from the tight control exerted by Aristides, who steadfastly refused to "vomit" speeches *ex tempore* (VS 583). While many of these features are also to be found in the literature of this period outside declamation, it is in declamation that they seem to be found most frequently, and it may well have been from declamation that they spread to other genres. Beyond the style of declamation, the broader culture attacked in Lucian's works is clearly that of declaiming sophists.<sup>15</sup>

So: many works in the Lucianic corpus attack the style and broader associated culture of contemporary rhetoric — which means above all declamation — in particular at its more exuberant extremes. It is then at first sight surprising to find elsewhere in the corpus typical examples of declamation. *Tyrannicide*, for example, the subject of the *Tyrannicida*, is, as we have seen (not least in Lycinus' own account, p. 3 with n. 11) one of the quintessential topics of declamation. In terms of argumentation, too, (admittedly a topic that we have not seen satirized in Lucian), the work uses the steps of argument that Hermogenes lays out for

declamations, such as this one, that turn on a definition (in this case, of what makes a tyrannicide).<sup>16</sup> The subject of the *Abdicatus* is not quite so proverbial, but wicked stepmothers<sup>17</sup> and disinheritance<sup>18</sup> are certainly common among declamation themes, and their treatment — family disgrace masked by figured speech — is in accordance with that recommended by Ps.-Hermogenes' *De inventione*, in which indeed family disgrace provides an exemplary case of when figured speech might be needed (IV.13.4, IV.13.13–19). Stylistically too, these two Lucianic declamations seem to correspond to the picture given — albeit in a more outrageously comic fashion — in works like the *Rhetorum Praeceptor*, with the *Tyrannicida* somewhat more exuberant than the *Abdicatus*. In both works we find an abundance of figures, particularly of the *isocola* of the list style. The disowned son describes his first disownment as:

μῖσος ἄλογον καὶ νόμον ἀπηνῆ καὶ βλασφημίας προχείρους καὶ  
δικαστήριον σκυθρωπὸν καὶ βοὴν καὶ ὀργὴν καὶ ὅλως χολῆς  
μεστὰ πάντα

the senseless hatred and the harsh law and the easy abuse and the grim courtroom and the shouting and the anger and everything being full of bile (*Abdicatus* 3).

Notice, in addition to the *isocola*, the sound effects (ἄλογον καὶ νόμον, ὅλως χολῆς), and the patterning within the list, with two shorter noun phrases (μῖσος ἄλογον καὶ νόμον ἀπηνῆ), two longer (βλασφημίας προχείρους καὶ

δικαστήριον σκυθρωπόν), and finally two nouns alone with homoeoteleuton (καὶ βοήν καὶ ὀργήν). In the *Tyrannicida*, *isocola* are equally prevalent: the tyrant is called:

ὁ τοὺς δορυφόρους συνέχων, ὁ τὴν φρουρὰν κρατύνων, ὁ τοὺς  
 τυραννουμένους φοβῶν, ὁ τοὺς ἐπιβουλεύοντας ἐκκόπτων... ὁ  
 τοὺς ἐφήβους ἀνασπῶν, ὁ ἐνυβρίζων τοῖς γάμοις

the man who kept the bodyguard together, the man who strengthened the garrison, the man who frightened the subjects of the tyranny, the man who extirpated those plotting against him, the man who stole away young men, the man who committed outrage against marriages (5)

More generally, this declamation is further pervaded by an insistent antithesis between two and one,<sup>19</sup> and there is also an extended theatrical metaphor running through the work (below, p. 20–22).

## II. LUCIANIC (AUTO-)BIOGRAPHIES

So: Lucian's declamations present prime examples of the genre that is so virulently attacked in his other works. Now such inconsistencies within a literary persona are not uncommon, and have been dealt with in various ways. Glenn Most offers a typology of such approaches in his discussion of how scholars ancient and modern have sought to reconcile Sappho's surviving poetry, largely homosexual in outlook, with a biographical tradition that considered her a paradigm of insatiable heterosexuality.<sup>20</sup> The three strategies he identifies he calls "duplication,"

“narrativization,” and “condensation.” In duplication, perhaps the most extreme strategy, the troubling persona is split in half and its discrepant elements assigned to two authors. Thus we would have two Sapphos, one a poet, the other a prostitute; this indeed seems to have been the most popular approach in antiquity. Such a strategy has not, however, been adopted for Lucian. In part, this may be because the inconsistency is less stark in Lucian’s works (the anti-rhetorical material far outweighing the declamations in bulk and scholarly attention received), though of greater importance must surely be the attractiveness in Lucian’s case of what Most calls “narrativization.” Narrativization allows two mutually contradictory propositions (in this case, contempt for rhetorical culture, and the active practice of declamation) to be true of a single figure by assigning them to different periods in the author’s life. In the case of Lucian, such a solution seems at first glance to be authorized by Lucian’s works themselves. The most important passage comes in the *Bis Accusatus* (32), where Lycinus, defending himself against Rhetoric’s charge that he has abandoned her, says:

καλῶς εἶχέ μοι ἀνδρὶ ἤδη τετταράκοντα ἔτη σχεδὸν γεγονότι  
 θορύβων μὲν ἐκείνων καὶ δικῶν ἀπηλλάχθαι καὶ τοὺς ἄνδρας  
 τοὺς δικαστὰς ἀτρεμεῖν ἔαν, τυράννων κατηγορίας καὶ ἀριστέων  
 ἐπαίνους ἐκφυγόντα

It was right for me, as a man who was by now about forty years old, to give up those noisy lawsuits, and to leave the men of the jury in peace, shunning denunciations of tyrants and encomia of war-heroes



Here the reference to declamation is clear, as we said above (p. 3 with n. 11). This “conversion” is also referred to in the *Piscator*, though this time without any indication of date. Parrhesiades says:

ἐπειδὴ τάχιστα συνείδον ὅποσα τοῖς ῥητορεύουσιν ἀναγκαῖον τὰ  
 δυσχερῆ προσεῖναι... ταῦτα μὲν, ὥσπερ εἰκὸς ἦν, ἀπέφυγον

as soon as I realised what disagreeable qualities speakers needed to  
 acquire... as was reasonable, I avoided them (29)

Elsewhere in the same work he is further referred to more briefly as ἀπολιπὼν τὰ  
 δικαστήρια (“abandoning the courtrooms”) (25): the phrasing in this case does not  
 rule out real forensic oratory in addition to declamation.

Now this self-periodization has been so successful that few scholars have  
 seen Lucian’s declaiming as a problem: it has readily been concluded that the  
 declamations, and perhaps a few other works that incarnate specifically rhetorical  
 forms, were written before Lucian was 40, the rest of his surviving works after the  
 age of 40.<sup>21</sup> Accordingly, it is considered that there is no inconsistency, and, given  
 that the declamations come from a purely rhetorical phase of Lucian’s literary  
 career, little of interest in these works (or rather, little of interest outside of pure  
 rhetoric — a big qualification, for rhetoric, even “pure” rhetoric, is always intensely  
 interesting).

Yet literary periodization of any kind is always suspect, as Moles convincingly showed for Dio, citing a number of other equally suspicious cases.<sup>22</sup> In reality, Lucian's literary transformation was probably much less stark than is presented in the *Bis Accusatus*.<sup>23</sup> The work was not intended as an objective account of Lucian's literary development for the benefit of future scholars, and while its true purposes may be harder to divine, among the central concerns of this complex piece seems to be literary self-advertisement. The work advertises Lucian's most innovative literary product, the satirical dialogue. Accordingly this innovation must be presented in the strongest terms possible — indeed, as a conversion, with Lucian formerly utterly uninterested in humour.<sup>24</sup> The starkness of Lucian's presentation is only sharpened by the romantic narrative that is used to dramatize the transition. If Rhetoric was his lover, then of course he must have been utterly devoted to her before he took up with someone else, with not a thought for comedy: semi-abandonment does not make for a good romantic story.<sup>25</sup> But it is *prima facie* implausible that a conversion from rhetoric to dialogue and satire would have been quite so swift, total, or irreversible: this is simply not how literary careers usually go. One does not generally develop a sense of humour overnight: it seems quite plausible that the satirical featured in Lucian's output before any turn away from rhetoric. Equally, it is unlikely that whatever stimuli — whether artistic instincts or literary currents — induced Lucian to compose declamations before his conversion would have ceased entirely to be operative afterwards, even if they did now carry less weight with him: rhetoric continued to dominate literary production throughout Lucian's lifetime and for centuries afterwards. Indeed, the vast bulk of Lucian's works, most of which are usually assigned to the post-conversion period, show a strong rhetorical influence, even if they do not usually incarnate the forms

prescribed in rhetorical theory, such as declamations or encomia.<sup>26</sup> Nor is there anything in this *Bis Accusatus* or the *Piscator* that rules out a return to rhetoric or rhetorical forms later in Lucian's career.<sup>27</sup> In short, it seems quite plausible that there were elements of satire in any "rhetorical" period of Lucian's, and elements of rhetoric in any "post-rhetorical" period.<sup>28</sup> If so, the inconsistency between declamation and anti-rhetorical satire would persist.

Furthermore, there is actually a little positive evidence that Lucian continued to declaim after the shift described in the *Bis Accusatus*, and even that one of the surviving declamations (the *Tyrannicida*, on which we shall focus shortly) is from that period. For declamations were typically preceded by *prolaliae*, short introductory talks by the declaimer *in propria persona*: among Lucian's *prolaliae* there are two, the *Bacchus* and the *Hercules*, that explicitly claim to be the products of the author's old age (*Bacchus* 6–8; *Hercules* 7–8).<sup>29</sup> Now while it is possible that these *prolaliae* were preludes to a performance of something other than declamation, it is hardly the most likely scenario: indeed, in the *Hercules* Lucian lays claim to oratorical powers. There is no real argument for such a conclusion beyond belief in a total rejection of rhetoric on Lucian's part aged 40, which of course is the very point at issue. Furthermore (and this point is suggestive rather than decisive), the argumentation deployed in the *Tyrannicida* looks rather later than we would expect on the traditional Lucianic biography. Lucian must have been learning his rhetorical theory in something like 135–45, and if we assign the *Tyrannicida* to a rhetorical period, we cannot get it later than about 165. Yet (to use the terminology) the "division" (διαίρεσις) of the "issue" (στάσις) into what are called "headings" (κεφάλαια)<sup>30</sup> in the *Tyrannicida* is actually closest to that prescribed by the theorist Hermogenes,<sup>31</sup> whom Philostratus tells us (*VS* 577–78)

was fifteen when he performed for Marcus Aurelius (on what must have been the emperor's eastern tour of 175/6) and so cannot possibly have been teaching in time for Lucian to have encountered his theories either as a student or before his alleged rejection of rhetoric.<sup>32</sup> Of course, something like Hermogenes' theories may have been floating around before Hermogenes, though we have enough evidence to know that the *Tyrannicida* would have looked somewhat different had Lucian been using the theory of the earlier theorist Zeno.<sup>33</sup>

It seems, then, that we will not be able to resolve the conflict between Lucian's declaiming and the anti-rhetorical views presented elsewhere in the corpus by means of narrativization.

### III. THE *TYRANNICIDA*

Most's third and final option for reconciling discrepant elements is "condensation." In the case of Sappho, this means embracing the contradiction between *vita* and oeuvre as the rare achievement of a poetic temper, but we might usefully work with a broader notion of condensation as simply the acceptance of dissonance in an author. Why must literary personae be consistent at all? Real personalities, after all, are not always consistent: why should a literary persona, free(r) from the limitations of human psychology, be so? A weak form of Most's condensation, then, may produce a Lucian or a Lucianic persona that if not totally consistent is nonetheless not intolerably divergent.

Yet the search for consistency is not only generally speaking a very natural reading strategy (as reception history shows) but also in Lucian's case one authorized by his texts themselves, which often purport to present (however elusively) the contents of their author's mind (in the first person, or in the guise of Lycinus, The Syrian, or Parrhesiades), and which furthermore on occasion show

themselves concerned with questions of internal consistency (for example *Apologia; Bis Accusatus*). We should ask ourselves then whether the stronger form of condensation is not possible. I believe it is: I believe that when read closely, and in particular against Choricus' version of the same theme (Choricus *Declamationes* 7), the *Tyrannicida* is revealed as complementary to the other Lucianic works concerned with rhetoric, such as the *Rhetorum Praeceptor*, not contradictory. I say only complementary, for the concerns of these works are not identical to those found in works like the *Rhetorum Praeceptor*. There are differences in first, subject matter and second, method. In terms of subject matter, hyperatticism is not in view here, nor the alleged random ordering adopted by declaimers, nor the alleged piles of irrelevant *exempla*. Figures do come under fire, though they are not the main target. The main target seems rather to be above all the contrivance involved in declamation: the extraordinary contortions through which a speaker must put himself to twist the bizarre data of any given declamation scenario in his favour. The method too has changed. What we find in the declamations is a subtler sort of humour, less commonly found in Lucian, and less celebrated. In this mode, a satirist slowly but relentlessly confounds our expectations of a genre until the work becomes absurd. The end result is something quieter but potentially even more potent than the outrageous incongruities of more obvious satire: the audience, who barely noticed as the work slipped imperceptibly into parody, suddenly find themselves stranded in absurdity, and as they wonder how a work that began in such a conventional fashion can have reached such a point, are made to realise the absurdity latent in the genre. Carried through effectively, such a lesson can fatally destabilize the audience's ability to distinguish

between reality and parody, and in future call even the most conventional performance into question.<sup>34</sup>

The closest parallel to the *Tyrannicida* and the *Abdicatus* in Lucian is perhaps the *Hippias*, a by-the-rules encomium of a bathhouse that lingers just a little too long on the trivia of its architecture and culminates bathetically in praise of, among other things, its two toilets (8): καὶ μή με ὑπολάβῃ τις μικρὸν ἔργον προθέμενον κοσμεῖν τῷ λόγῳ προαιρεῖσθαι (“and let no one suppose that I have taken a minor work as my subject, and that I purpose to dress it up with my eloquence,”) says the speaker with delicious disingenuousness. The *Muscae Encomium* shows a similar sort of humour, though its perversion of rhetoric is much more obvious, and much more pervasive; the *de Syria Dea* also, which hovers in critics’ judgements between parody, pastiche, satire, and mimicry<sup>35</sup> might well belong to such a category, though there is not space to go into that much-debated work here. Such a mode of humour also has something in common with the two hoaxes that Galen tells us Lucian perpetuated.<sup>36</sup> On the first occasion, Lucian is said to have forged a nonsensical work in the name of Heraclitus; on the second occasion, Lucian seems to have made up some linguistic examples. On both occasions, experts assumed the works were genuine and embarrassed themselves by producing ingenious explanations of the forged material. We also, as Gotthard Strohmaier points out, hear of Lucian committing forgeries in the extant corpus: he claims to have made up the story about Peregrinus’ soul going up to heaven in the form of a vulture (*De mort. Peregr.* 39–40) (readily believed, Lucian claims), and he and others sent frivolous questions of various sorts to the prophet Alexander, whose answers, according to Lucian, were of course themselves fake (*Alex.* 53–54).<sup>37</sup> Now while I do not think that the *Tyrannicida* was meant as a hoax *per se*,

the nature of these reported hoaxes — subtly, almost imperceptibly, yet ultimately fatally different from genuine works — is very similar to the sort of destabilizingly ambiguous parody of which I think the *Tyrannicida* is an example.<sup>38</sup>

It is into such a category, then, that I propose to place Lucian's *Tyrannicida*. It is no accident that this declamation seems so utterly conventional: by choosing such a common theme, developing the argumentation according to the traditional divisions, and adopting a typically declamatory style, with numerous figures and elaborate theatrical imagery, this work can take aim, by a kind of synecdoche, at the declamatory genre as a whole; indeed, the satire may be particularly potent for having initially lured the audience into the false expectation that this will be an entirely conventional declamation.

As I have suggested, what is attacked above all in this work is the contrivance involved in producing a declamation. It begins with the declamation scenario, as often only a hair's breadth away from novelistic romance. That declamation scenarios were absurd was in fact a common complaint in antiquity,<sup>39</sup> and is probably implicit also in the *Bis Accusatus* in the Syrian's suggestion that it was καλῶς (“right”) for a man already about forty years old to stop declaiming: the idea seems to be that there is something rather childish<sup>40</sup> about, among other things, the θορύβων (“uproar”) of declamation (32). Now the scenario for the *Tyrannicida* is as follows. A man sets off for the acropolis intending to assassinate the tyrant currently in power in his city. He fails to find the tyrant, but does find the tyrant's son, whom he kills instead. When the tyrant discovers his son's dead body, he takes the sword left in his son's body by the speaker and kills himself. The speaker now claims the customary reward due to tyrannicides. Plenty of latent absurdity here: an incompetent and presumptuous tyrannicide indeed, who kills the

wrong man, apparently gives up the search for the tyrant, and then claims the reward regardless when the tyrant later commits suicide! To make this case, the speaker is forced to become entangled in multiple absurdities: that Lucian's text plays on these absurdities rather than tactfully ignoring them (as it should) can be established by close comparison with Choricus' version of the same declamation (Choricus *Declamationes* 7), which while impressive argumentatively, does not seem to show the same satirical spirit as Lucian's.

The right act, the wrong victim: to make his act as close to tyrannicide as possible, the speaker needs to play up the tyrannical qualities of the son and make him as much of a tyrant as his father. Choricus does: his speaker has overthrown δύο... δεσπότας ("two masters") (7.1), δύο... τυράννων ("two tyrants") (7.7), and δύο... τυραννίδας ("two tyrannies") (89). To mitigate his failure to kill the tyrant himself, it might also make sense also to play down the tyrant's own tyrannical qualities, and this Choricus also does, at least in relative terms. τοῦ τεκόντος ἐφύετο χείρων ὁ παῖς ("the son was worse than the one who begot him") (7.2) he says, arguing that to be born to tyranny is worse than to come to it later in life; δυεῖν ἄρα τῇ πόλει δεινῶν τὸ μέγα μὲν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ καταλέλυσται, τὸ δὲ βραχὺ δι' ἐμοῦ ("so of the two evils the city endured, the greater was ended by me, the lesser through me") (7.3). Now the Chorician treatment brings out by contrast the exaggerated quality of the *Tyrannicida*. In outline, the two speeches pursue roughly the same strategy. In Lucian, the son's crimes are stressed in what feels very much like a commonplace (κοινὸς τόπος) against a tyrant (5), with classic elements such as torture, confiscations, exile, and rape, and the idea of two tyrants is as pervasive in Lucian as it was in Choricus.<sup>41</sup> And again, the sins of the



son (4) are said to have been greater than those of his father: at chapter 16 we hear υἱὸς ἦν τυράννου, μᾶλλον δὲ τύραννος χαλεπώτερος (“he was the tyrant’s son, or rather he was a more difficult tyrant.”) But as so often in this piece, Lucian’s version goes too far in mitigating the tyrant’s crimes: οὐ πάνυ τυραννικὸς αὐτός (“he wasn’t tyrannical at all himself”) (4) says the would-be tyrannicide of his tyrant; the tyrant ὅλως ἐτυραννεῖτο (“was wholly tyrannized”) (4) by his son; trying to make the most of his victory over the tyrant’s bodyguards, the tyrannicide finds himself arguing οὐ γὰρ δὴ αὐτός γε ὁ τύραννος μέγα καὶ δυσάλωτον καὶ δυσκατέργαστόν ἐστιν (“of course, it’s not the tyrant himself who is mighty and hard to catch and hard to overcome”) (15). What in particular tips these claims over the line into absurdity is the adverbial modifiers οὐ πάνυ (“not at all”) and ὅλως (“wholly”) and δὴ (“of course,”) as well as the typically declamatory paradox of using of the τυρανν- root in negating the tyrant’s crimes: declamation is here being dismantled with one of its own tools. If the tyrant was not in fact a tyrant in any sense, why on earth did the speaker set out to kill him? Why would it even matter then that the tyrant had subsequently committed suicide? It makes sense to play down the tyrant’s crimes, to be sure, but in Lucian they run the risk of being played down to the point of insignificance.

But the act, whether tyrannicide or not, needs to be explained. Why when he had set out to rid the city of its tyrant did the speaker get side-tracked into killing his son? Why did he then give up his search for the tyrant? How — and Choricus identifies this as a particular weakness of the case in his preliminary theoretical discussion (*protheoria*) (6) — can the speaker claim a reward for a killing that he did not perform himself, or that was not a direct or likely consequence of his

actions? Furthermore — an objection that Choricus considers — was not the more likely consequence of killing the son but not the father an intensification of the tyranny as the bereaved tyrant sought revenge, rather than the tyrant's suicide (51)? In Choricus, these objections are met with sensible counter-arguments. When he encountered the tyrant's son, the speaker was, not unreasonably, overcome with anger at the son's crimes and so decided to kill him on the spot (9–10). He gave up his quest to kill the tyrant only temporarily to share with the city his joy at the son's death, and to win gratitude as the first to proclaim the good news (10–11). He intended, to be sure, τοῦτο ποιήσειν τὸν τύραννον, ὅπερ ἔφθη ποιήσας (“to do first to the tyrant what the tyrant in fact did,”) since οὐ ... ἀνάλωσεν ὅλον μοι τὸν θυμὸν ἢ τοῦ μειρακίου σφαγῇ (“slaughtering the boy had not used up all my anger”) (11); he had the *mens rea* of a tyrannicide, and was only prevented by factors beyond his control from achieving the *actus reus*. Nonetheless, he still claims that the tyrant's suicide followed closely and plausibly from his killing of the tyrant's son, though he must work hard to do this: chapters 52–71 are given over to this argument, and it is seeded earlier in the piece by means of references to the tyrant's devotion to his only son (4, 15, 26).

The speaker of Lucian's work, by contrast, avoids such sensible arguments. He gives no real explanation for how he got diverted into killing the tyrant's son, though he almost certainly<sup>42</sup> could have done so. Moreover, rather than claiming, as Choricus does, and again as he himself probably could have done, that he would have killed the tyrant had he not been prevented from doing so by factors beyond his control, he instead, after a brief suggestion that the tyrant was so pathetic as hardly to be worth killing (8) (which would again raise the question of why his

killing was to be attempted at all, let alone celebrated or rewarded), he makes the much more difficult and indeed implausible claim that he deliberately did not kill the tyrant because he knew that what he had done thus far would inevitably lead to the tyrant's death: πάντως τὸ ἐσόμενον αὐτὸ προεμαντεύομην ("I prophesied exactly what was going to happen in every respect") (13); εὐθὺς ἠπιστάμην τεθνηξόμενον αὐτόν ("I knew that he was going to die at once") (18). Again, it is the adverbs — πάντως ("in every way,") εὐθύς ("immediately") — that tip this over the line into implausibility; the choice of the rather poetic verb προμαντεύομαι ("I prophesy") (13), instead something more prosaic like προοράω ("I foresee") or προνοέω ("I anticipate") only heightens the implausibility of this claim. Once again, Lucian's speaker goes too far and makes a much less credible claim than we find in Choricus: in Choricus, no stronger conclusion was dared in support of the speaker's claim to have caused the tyrant's death than that it was τοῖς ὑπ' ἐμοῦ γενομένοις οὐκ ἀνάρμοστον ("not out of harmony with what had been done by me") (58).<sup>43</sup>

Now Lucian's speaker's claim is already so overstated that almost any argument supporting the idea that the tyrant's death followed inevitably from the death of the son runs the risk of undermining his case, but even so, once again, his supporting arguments are very weak, and weaker than those offered by Choricus. The greatest weakness is simply in terms of scale: in Choricus the link between the two deaths is argued closely over the course of nineteen chapters (52–71); Lucian's work by contrast only gives a few chapters to this question. Obviously, Lucian's piece is shorter than that of Choricus, but given how complex the issue is, the decision (and it must have been a decision) to give them insufficient space

necessarily weakens the case. Brevity, perhaps, is in this case part of satire: by shrinking the object of one's mockery, one robs it of its force; indeed, the closest pieces in the corpus to the *Tyrannicida* and the *Abdicatus*, the *Hippias* and *Muscae Encomium*, are also much shorter than typical examples of their genre would be. Now in Lucian we find at least one supporting argument that is also used in Choricus: that the tyrant's love for his son made his suicide more likely (Choricus *Declamationes* 7.52–72, Lucian *Tyrannicida* 18, with hints at 9 and 11); on the other hand, the *Tyrannicida* omits to argue, as Choricus does (*Declamationes* 7.17, 27, 68–70), that the tyrant might have feared that he would be next, and sought to forestall his assassination by taking his own life first. But Lucian's speaker's main supporting argument is quite unexpected: he claims that he deliberately mutilated the tyrant's son's body πολλοῖς τραύμασιν ἐς τὰ φανερά (“with many wounds to the visible parts”) (20) — a grotesque image — in order to cause his father the maximum possible pain. But he does not stop there: after explicitly saying that he was not present to witness the tyrant's suicide (ἐγὼ γὰρ ἀπηλλαττόμην (“for I had withdrawn”) (20)), Lucian's tyrannicide has the effrontery to have the tyrant conveniently frame himself at the moment of death as being the victim of tyrannicide, crying out in a splendidly polysyllabic utterance τετυραννοκτονήμεθα (“we are the victims of tyrannicide!”) (20), and, in a final apostrophe to the sword, τυραννοκτόνησον (“commit tyrannicide!”) (21).<sup>44</sup> This is wildly implausible, and obviously too good to be true: its exaggerated quality reveals the contrivance of the speaker, casting doubt even on the more plausible things that have been said so far. Ultimately, claims the speaker, in the biggest

paradox of the piece, τὸν τύραννον ἀπέκτεινα ἐτέρῳ φόνῳ (“I killed the tyrant by slaying someone else”) (17).

Finally, in Choricus we find here and there the bolder suggestion that the tyrant’s suicide was actually a better result than a more conventional tyrannicide, because it is more painful to kill oneself having seen one’s own son killed (23) and because with both father and son dead the tyranny is definitely over (25–26; 55). Both of these arguments appear in Lucian,<sup>45</sup> but once again are pushed too far: what happened is claimed to have been the best possible outcome: ὡς ἐνῆν ἄριστα διεπραξάμην (“I accomplished it in the best possible way”) (17); ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ γενόμενον μικρότερον ἦν· νῦν δὲ λαμπρότερόν ἐστι τῇ καινότητι (“if it had been done by me, it would have been a lesser deed. As things are, it is more glorious by reason of its novelty”) (22). Note particularly the addition of καινότης (“novelty,” “freshness”) to the reasons given for preferring what actually happened, as if anyone living under tyranny would worry about the aesthetic merits of a proposed means of tyrannicide!<sup>46</sup>

So much for the argumentation. Lucian’s perversion of the declamatory genre is supported also by the extended theatrical metaphor found in the work.<sup>47</sup> This first appears in chapter 8, at the end of the narration, where it is said that the tyrant by his death τέλος ἐπέθηκε τῷ ἐμῷ δράματι (“provided the ending to my play,”) and then at length in the ekphrasis that concludes the work (20–21). Having left appropriately distressing wounds in the son’s body, the speaker slips away:

ποιητῆς μὲν τῆς ὅλης τραγωδίας γεγενημένος, καταλιπὼν δὲ τῷ  
 ὑποκριτῇ τὸν νεκρὸν καὶ τὴν σκηνὴν καὶ τὸ ξίφος καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ  
 τοῦ δράματος

having become the playwright of the whole tragedy, and having left behind  
 for the actor the body and the set and the sword and the other parts of a play  
 (20)

When the tyrant looks for his son, he looks for a sword, πάλαι δὲ ἦν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ  
 καὶ τοῦτο προπαρεσκευασμένον ("but even this had long ago been prepared  
 in advance by me") (21); finally, at the very end of the speech he says:

μεμέρισται δὲ ἐς πολλοὺς τὸ ἔργον ὥσπερ ἐν δράματι· καὶ τὰ μὲν  
 πρῶτα ἐγὼ ὑπεκρινάμην, τὰ δεύτερα δὲ ὁ παῖς, τὰ τρίτα δὲ ὁ  
 τύραννος αὐτός, τὸ ξίφος δὲ πᾶσιν ὑπηρέτησεν

the deed has been divided among many, like in a play: I acted the first part,  
 the tyrant's son the second, and the tyrant himself the third, and the sword  
 served us all (22)

The scenario too, has something of the flavour of Greek tragedy about it, with the  
 discovery of dead bodies (20) and apostrophes of swords (twice: 19 & 21). Now  
 this dramatic metaphor is a good choice for a speaker who wants to claim that he

was in control of events: he didn't kill the tyrant himself, but he as it were wrote the script that the tyrant followed. But the metaphor, as often in this work, makes claims that might be considered stronger than is prudent in terms of strict persuasion. The tyrant's death took more than simply leaving a sword around for him to use, and the tyrant was not of course following the tyrannicide's script. What is intended as a metaphor stressing the speaker's control over events instead, on account of the implausibly extravagant claims it implies, ends up highlighting not the speaker's close control over events but rather the artificiality of his claims. It is further interesting to note Quintilian's assertion that if declamation were not preparation for real oratory (as is sometimes alleged in our sources, n. 39), it would be mere *scaenicae ostentationi* (*Inst.* 2.10.8). If such an image was at all common in the criticism of declamation, then its use here by a declaimer further undermines the work.<sup>48</sup>

Theatrical imagery is not the only means by which attention is drawn to the contrivance of this work. For this declamation also makes reference to the rhetorical theory that has shaped it — a feature we might call “metarhetoric” — with almost unparalleled explicitness. The most glaring piece of metarhetoric is the words ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἐς τέλος (“from beginning to end”) (14),<sup>49</sup> which is used by the speaker of his second, more analytical narrative (14–18). This phrase clearly evokes one of the headings in Hermogenes' canonical divisions of the different issues: τὰ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἄχρι τέλους, conventionally translated as the “sequence of events,” that is a narration of what happened (with appropriate rhetorical slanting) (for example *De statibus* III.10–11). As (*inter alia*) the first heading in the division of the first issue (conjecture) in Hermogenes,<sup>50</sup> one imagines that this term would have been

particularly familiar to those who had been through a rhetorical education. Technical too, though a little less glaring, is the speaker's indignant rejection of the thought that his action might be ἀτελῆ (“incomplete”) (9):<sup>51</sup> in Hermogenes (*De statibus* II.2), ἀτελῆ (“incomplete”) actions, somehow deficient instances of a given crime, are the ones about which the stasis of definition arises. Three times the speaker also refers to the allegation that his deed was lacking in some respect: though the vocabulary he uses (ἐνδεῖν (“to be lacking”: 10, 11, 14) is not found in Hermogenes, this is precisely the conception of incomplete actions that we find in Hermogenes; the unusual abstraction with which the idea is stated here brings it close to metarhetoric. This metarhetoric works together with the theatrical imagery to break repeatedly the dramatic illusion and, by laying bare the guts of the rhetoric, further expose the contrivance involved in producing a declamation.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

This article, then, has suggested two new contexts in which to read the *Tyrannicida*, and will finish by offering a third. First, it (re-)situates the work among a group of Lucianic texts such as the *Hippias* or the forged Heraclitan piece, works that fatally undermine various sorts of cultural products by producing imitations that are close to the real thing yet flawed in small but devastating ways. The other declamations in the Lucianic corpus (*Phalaris* 1 and 2 and the *Abdicatus*), are, I think, just as amenable to readings of this sort: the *Abdicatus*, in particular, seems designed to show what happens when figured speech goes too far. Second, as regards theme, I suggest that the *Tyrannicida* should be seen as complementary to the other Lucianic works concerned with rhetoric, such as the *Rhetorum Praeceptor*, not contradictory: generally speaking it agrees with them in its low estimation of



rhetoric, and it shares some of their more specific concerns, but it focuses in particular on the argumentative contortions a declaimer had to go through to make his case. Finally, as regards the wider social position of Lucian's declamations, I suggest that the *Tyrannicida* would be most fruitfully grouped — not least on account of its close evocation of contemporary issue theory — with satirical works that offer comment on major cultural phenomena of the day, such as the *de historia conscribenda*, the *de morte Peregrini*, or the *Alexander*. On all three counts, it stands as an eminently Lucianic work.

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<sup>1</sup> All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. I use Macleod's (1972–1987) text of Lucian. For Choricus, I use the text of Foerster and Richtsteig (1929); Choricus' surviving declamations have all been translated in a collection edited by Penella (2009). I cite Aphthonius, Hermogenes, and Ps.-Hermogenes according to the editions of Patillon (2008; 2009; 2012).

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Nesselrath 1985; Weißenberger 1996; Georgiadou and Larmour 1998; von Möllendorff 2000; Lightfoot 2003; Pilhofer *et al.* 2005; Hopkinson 2008; Camerotto 2009.

<sup>3</sup> We have four declamations by Lucian: the *Tyrannicida* and the *Abdicatus*, which both use scenarios very typical of the genre (nn. 17–18, below), and *Phalaris* 1 and *Phalaris* 2, which are rather more unusual. For Greek declamation generally, see Russell 1983. There are brief analyses of the *Tyrannicida* and *Abdicatus* in terms of rhetorical theory in Bompaigne 1958, 242–6, and Heath 1995, 175–8, but otherwise almost nothing in major works such as Helm 1906; Baldwin 1973; Anderson 1976; Hall 1981; Bracht Branham 1989; Billault 1994. The reading that I will offer of the *Tyrannicida* has been very briefly adumbrated in a few places, e.g. “il frutto... di una incipiente, larvata parodia della retorica” (Longo 1976–1993, 2:197), “Lucian's approach to declamation [in the *Abd.*] has a characteristic lightness of touch; this is even more in evidence in his *Tyrannicide*, with its many tongue-in-cheek moments” (Berry and Heath 1997, 414); for Karavas (2005), 194, the *Tyrannicida* is “un opuscul... ironique”; Tomassi writes “it cannot be ruled out that the author... aimed at criticizing the contemporary sophistic... for vainly



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repeating arguments in the interest of form rather than content” (Tomassi 2015b 254; cf. Tomassi 2015a, 359).

<sup>4</sup> Moles 1978.

<sup>5</sup> For Lucian’s other declamations, see p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> For Choricus’ *Tyrannicida*, see Tomassi 2014; 2015b; 2015a. Tomassi compares the declamatory tyrants of Lucian, Choricus, and others, but his comparison is quite different in focus and conclusions from my own. Tomassi (2015a, 341) describes Lucian’s piece as “un intrattenimento letterario raffinato,” and concludes that Lucian makes a “considerable effort to vary a unitary scholastic model,” “combining the Platonic conception of the tyrant, which consisted in a certain attitude and a particular way of life, and Xenophon’s image of the tyrant,” with the latter defined as a “statesman trapped in his role, forced to give up the freedom of a private citizen”; he further argues that the Lucian’s depiction of the relationship between the tyrant and his son makes the declamation “intensely dramatic” and makes the tyrant less isolated than usual (Tomassi 2015b, 253; cf. Tomassi 2015a 356–7). Choricus’ declamation, meanwhile, is said to show “an intensification of the literary aspects of declamation,” exploring “character and psychological motivation” (Tomassi 2015b, 262). Tomassi also enumerates some of Choricus’ debts to Lucian in terms of phrasing and argument (Tomassi 2015a, 357–9; cf. Tomassi 2015b, 227 n. 52, 228).

<sup>7</sup> Lycinus is one of several *personae* found in Lucian’s works (along with “The Syrian,” “Parrhesiades” (“Free-Speaker,”) “Tychiades” (“Man of fortune,”) and “Momus” (“Blame”)) that “flaunt the possibility of identity with the author, but deny the certainty or completeness of this connection” (Ní-Mheallaigh 2010, 129). Cf. Whitmarsh 2001, 253, and Dubel 1994.

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<sup>8</sup> Zweimüller's (2008, esp. 93–107) introduction to her commentary on the *Rhetorum Praeceptor* offers a wide-ranging survey of attitudes to rhetoric in Lucian's work.

<sup>9</sup> For the debate, and bibliography, see Janiszewski, Stebnicka, and Szabat 2015, 390–1.

<sup>10</sup> See Gibson 2012 for the *Rhetorum Praeceptor* as a “parodic inversion” (93) of everything that ancient students’ teachers held dear.

<sup>11</sup> ἀριστέων ἢ τυραννοκτόνων ἢ πενήτων ἢ γεωργῶν (“war-heroes or tyrant-killers or poor men or famers,”) Lucian *Salt.* 65; τοὺς πένητας ὑπετυπώσατο καὶ τοὺς πλουσίους καὶ τοὺς ἀριστεὰς καὶ τοὺς τυράννους (“[the second sophistic] sketched poor men and rich men and war-heroes and tyrants,”) Philostr. *VS* 481. Cf. also Juv. 7.150–4: tyrannicide is *crambe repetita* (“rehashed cabbage,” trans. Braund 2004, 311), and such material *occidit magistros*. On the place of tyrants in sophistic rhetoric, see Malosse 2006.

<sup>12</sup> Civiletti 2002, 387 n. 29.

<sup>13</sup> Polemo: Reader 1996. Hadrian: Hinck 1873.

<sup>14</sup> Innes and Winterbottom 1988, 10.

<sup>15</sup> For example, the bad teacher of rhetoric’s recommendation of numerous love affairs (*Rhetorum Praeceptor* 23) matches the lively sex lives of many sophists reported in the *VS* (486, 489, 513, 517, and 599).

<sup>16</sup> For the use by Lucian of the sort of theory we find in Hermogenes, see Heath 1995, 175–8; Bompaire 1958, 242–6. For the definition of tyrannicide, see Sopater’s discussion of the cases at Walz VIII.95.21–98.11 and 98.12–100.17. See also Heath 1995, 103–5 on Hermog. *De statibus* IV.2–8.

<sup>17</sup> Hermogenes' two scenarios involving stepmothers (Hermog. *De statibus* III.39.3–5, III.45.3–5) frequently recur in discussions by later rhetoricians. For mentions of the former, see Walz IV.86.14–17, 211.17–18, 447.26–450.28, V.86.18–20, 140.20–22, VII.135.2–4, 180 n. 15, 362.12–14, 367.8–28, VIII.28.5–7; for the latter, see Walz IV.207.21–2, 211.6–7, 301 n. 36, 357.27–8, 465.19–468.15, 700 n.6, V.85.27–8, VII.180 n. 15, 182.15–16, 390.11–12, VIII.77.25–9; Syrianus *In Hermogenem commentaria* II.63.13–14; 150.5–18 Rabe. That both are older than Hermogenes is suggested by their presence in Sulpicius Victor (*Rhet. Lat. Min.* 327.33–5, 334.30–1), and therefore probably in the earlier Zeno (see n. 33).

<sup>18</sup> Scenarios involving disinheritance are too common to list in full: see e.g. Hermog. *De statibus* (II.5.8–9, II.12.6–10 (=X.6.2–5), III.9.3–5 (= III.12.5–6), and one defective scenario, I.21.1–2); Ps.-Hermogenes *De inventione* (I.1.14.1–6, IV.13.14.1–5, IV.13.16.3–6, IV.13.18.3–6); Sopater Rhetor *Diaireseis Zētēmatōn* (Walz VIII.78.22–25, 124.18–20, 175.11–14, 227.24–5, 244.10–11, 270.6–8, 336.3–4). As in the case of the stepmother scenarios, Hermogenes' examples of disinheritance are discussed extensively by later rhetoricians: for discussions of the case treated at *De statibus* II.12.6–10 (=X.6.2–5) see Heath 1995, 145.

<sup>19</sup> δύο τυράννους... μιᾷς ἡμέρας; μίαν... ἐπ' ἀμφοτέροις... δωρεάν; πληγῇ μιᾷ δύο πονηροὺς ἀποσκευασάμενος (“two tyrants... in one day”; “one reward for both deeds”; “having done away with two scoundrels with one blow”) (1); ἀπλῆν... τυραννίδα... μίαν δουλείαν.. οὐδὲ ἐνὸς... δεσπότη; δύο ἀνθ' ἐνὸς τυράννους (“a single tyranny... one slavery... nor of one master”) (“two tyrants instead of one”) (4).

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<sup>20</sup> Most 1996, 11–35.

<sup>21</sup> E.g. Helm 1906, 11; Hall 1981, 58–9, 459.

<sup>22</sup> Moles 1978.

<sup>23</sup> For a full discussion of Lucian’s literary conversion, with bibliography, see Braun 1994, 279–306.

<sup>24</sup> “Conversions as such are a sensational enough rhetorical gesture” (Anderson 1982, 85).

<sup>25</sup> For more reasons to be suspicious of the conversion narrative on literary grounds, see Jones 1986, 12–14. Anderson (1982, 85) also suggests that Lucian’s self-presentation here may have been “largely dictated” by Cratinus’ *Pytinē*.

<sup>26</sup> “More spurious still is the claim that he abandoned rhetoric for philosophy; still less did he ever abandon law-courts and τυράννων κατηγορίας, which are rife throughout the extant works” (Anderson 1982, 85).

<sup>27</sup> Hall (1981, 58–9) sensibly imagines a by no means implausible scenario in which Lucian penned a few declamations in old age to show that he still could when it was suggested by others that he abandoned the genre through lack of ability.

<sup>28</sup> Thus Piot: “Mais... il n’a jamais su se dépendre de l’idéal d’art qu’il avait admiré dans sa jeunesse et suivi jusqu’aux confins de sa maturité. S’il a délaissé le domaine conventionnel et les thèmes ordinaires de la sophistique courante... il restait un rhéteur... il changeait de *matière*, il n’a pas complètement change de *manière*” (italics Piot’s) (Piot 1914, 8).

<sup>29</sup> Piot 1914, 8–9.

<sup>30</sup> “Issue” (στάσις) refers to the fundamental dispute in any given case, such as whether or not the crime took place at all (the issue of “conjecture,” στοχασμός), or, if the two parties agree on the facts of what actually happened, a dispute over

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the best classification of these acts (the issue of “definition,” ὅρος, as in Lucian’s *Tyrannicida*). The division (διαίρεσις) breaks the issue down into “headings” (κεφάλαια), which are steps of argument appropriate to the sort of case in question.

<sup>31</sup> n. 16.

<sup>32</sup> For Hermogenes’ biography, see Janiszewski, Stebnicka, and Szabat 2015, 165–6.

<sup>33</sup> Zeno’s division lacks the headings of “assimilation” (συλλογισμός) and “importance” (πηλικότης), and adds an extra heading at the end (*Rhet. Lat. Min.* 336–7). For Zeno’s dates and the faithful transmission of his theories in the Latin of Sulpicius Victor, see Heath 2004, 24–5; Janiszewski, Stebnicka, and Szabat 2015, 384.

<sup>34</sup> The phenomenon I am describing therefore has more than a little in common with contemporary “mockumentaries” such as *The Office* or *In the Thick of It*.

<sup>35</sup> Lightfoot 2003, 197–9.

<sup>36</sup> Strohmaier 1976, 117–122.

<sup>37</sup> Macleod 1979, 326.

<sup>38</sup> On Lucian’s frauds, see also Anderson 1982, 71–4. A parallel from the “First Sophistic” might be Gorgias’ *Hel.*, or his *On What Is Not*: scholars still argue about how seriously to take the latter, and about the precise meaning of Gorgias’ description of the former as a παίγνιον. Gorgias of course is for Philostratus the “father” of the first sophistic (VS 481) and of *ex tempore* oratory (VS 482–3); among imperial writers, Proclus in his *prolaliae* is said to have resembled Gorgias (VS 604), and Scopelian is said to have studied him with particular care (VS 518).

<sup>39</sup> The most famous such complaint can be found at Petron. *Sat.* 1: *Et ideo ego adolescentulos existimo in scholis stultissimos fieri, quia nihil ex his, quae in usu habemus, aut audiunt aut vident, sed piratas cum catenis in litore stantes, sed tyrannos edicta scribentes quibus imperent filiis ut patrum suorum capita praecidant, sed responsa in pestilentiam data ut virgines tres aut plures immolentur* (“and I think that students become utterly stupid at school, because they don’t hear or see anything from everyday life, but rather pirates standing on the shore with chains, or tyrants writing edicts in which they order sons to cut off the heads of their own fathers, or oracular responses given in the face of a plague saying that three or more virgins should be buried alive.”) Similar complaints can be found at Tac. *Dial.* 35 and Quint. *Inst.* 2.10.5.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Sen. *Controv.* 3 preface 13 *hac puerili exercitatione*.

<sup>41</sup> Commonplaces against tyrants are illustrated by Lib. *Progymnasmata* 7.4 and Aph. *Prog.* VII.3–11. For the classic qualities of a tyrant, see Lanza 1977, and, on the tyrant in Latin declamation, see Tabacco 1985.

<sup>42</sup> We do not know how faithfully the preface now attached to the *Tyrannicida* represents the scenario that Lucian was declaiming (such paratextual elements are particularly uncertain textually), but it is hard to imagine that a reason could not have been found. Many declamation scenarios seem to be phrased in a laconic fashion precisely in order to provide the challenge of creatively filling-in the gaps in the case to suit the rhetorical needs of the situation, particularly when it came to actors’ motivations.

<sup>43</sup> It also seems foolish for Lucian’s speaker to raise the potential objection ἡκολούθησε δέ τι τέλος ἄλλως χρηστόν, ἐμοῦ μὴ θελήσαντος (“a result followed which chanced to be beneficial, without my having intended it,” trans.

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Harmon 1936, 459) (13). This is rejected, of course, but is a strong point, as Choricus says, and its placement right before the claim to absolute knowledge of the future makes it particularly harmful to the speaker's argument.

<sup>44</sup> The idea of tyrant as tyrannicide occurs first, in the speaker's voice, in chapter 8 (ἐτυραννοκτόνησεν "he [the tyrant] slew the tyrant," trans. Harmon 1936, 453).

<sup>45</sup> A more painful death: *Tyrannicida* 1, 17–18 (where it is implausibly claimed that for the tyrant to have been killed by the would-be tyrannicide would have been εὐκταϊότατον... αὐτῷ "his fondest prayer" (17), trans. Harmon 1936, 465), 20 (where with implausible convenience the tyrant is made to say that being allowed to live to see his son dead is worse than being killed straightaway). End of tyranny: 3, 6, 16.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. also τὸν τρόπον ἐκαινοτόμησα τῆς τῶν πονηρῶν τελευτῆς (2), and παραδοξότατον (1). For sophistry's characteristic interest in novelty, see Whitmarsh 2005, 36–7.

<sup>47</sup> Tomassi 2015b, 253–4; Tomassi 2015a, 359 n. 51.

<sup>48</sup> Such imagery was of course frequently used as a positive image for their performances by the sophists themselves, e.g. Wright 1921, 574 on σκηνή (which she renders as "outfit" or "getup.") Once again, Lucian (and Quintilian) pervert the master's tools.

<sup>49</sup> Heath 1995, 178.

<sup>50</sup> Though the issue of Lucian's declamation is "definition," not "conjecture," there is nothing to stop the headings of one issue being used in another, and indeed the heading προβολή ("presentation," trans. Heath (1995, 258)) in definition and other issues is said by Hermogenes to be the same as τὰ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἄχρη τέλους

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(“sequence of events,” trans. Heath (1995, 259)) (*De statibus* IV.2.1–2). Extant declamations are frequently seen to borrow headings in this way.

<sup>51</sup> Heath 1995, 177.